

Arkansas Insurance Department

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Governor



Julie Benafield Bowman
Commissioner

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Insurance Department Facilitates Donation of Cutting Edge Technology to Pulaski County Sheriff's Office

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS (March 12, 2008) —State Insurance Commissioner Julie Benafield Bowman announced in a Tuesday news conference the donation of a Mobile Plate Hunter 900 (MPH-900) License Plate Reading (LPR) system to the Pulaski County Sheriff's Office. According to Bowman, the Arkansas Insurance Department coordinated the efforts to secure funds from private insurance companies to pay for the system which has been installed in a patrol car. The companies participating in this project were Farmers Insurance, Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company of Arkansas, Nationwide Insurance, and State Farm Insurance.

The MPH-900 LPR system which operates at both patrol and highway speed, consists of two progressive infrared illuminated cameras mounted to a law enforcement vehicle, a processing unit in the trunk, and proprietary software loaded onto the in-car computer. Together, these components allow officers to capture images of license plates and instantaneously compare them with millions of Hot List records supplied by state and federal agencies, to identify vehicles of interest in real time, on the spot.

"This technology will greatly benefit insurance companies by lessening the time a stolen vehicle is out on the street, thus lessening the potential for damage for which the insurer and insured have to pay" said Bowman. "This is modern technology at its best," she went on to say.

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The unit, manufactured by ELSAG North America, is able to read license plates at incoming speeds in excess of 120 miles per hour and at passing speeds in excess of 75 miles per hour. It translates the read plate data into a digital image, checks the onboard hot list, and returns an alarm to the operator in milliseconds for appropriate action. The system has a built-in capability which allows it to communicate with a police operations center for alarm notification and throughout the day for database update.

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